



Sen. Don Benton

Ongoing legislative priorities

Throughout his tenure in the state Legislature, Senator Don Benton, R-Vancouver, has championed many important issues facing Washington state and residents of the 17th Legislative District. These issues include:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

As a member of the Senate Economic Development Committee, Senator Benton will continue to make the *creation of jobs* a priority.

Benton firmly believes that commitment to economic development involves a *long-term investment in education*, a *reduction in onerous and overlapping government regulations*, and a *reduction in excessive expenses placed on business by government*.

TRANSPORTATION:

During his time in the Legislature, Senator Benton has maintained a leadership role on transportation issues, believing that *transportation is an integral aspect of Washington's economic development*.

He has worked vigorously to *improve roads* and *reduce traffic congestion* for the sake of Washington commuters and the *movement of freight vital to our state's economy*.

Senator Benton has been a staunch advocate for *new and innovative ways to spend every transportation dollar wisely*. In an effort to do just that, he has pushed for the state to *open up high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes during nonpeak hours*, and to *lease highway rest areas* to private companies.

PROPERTY TAXES:

Proving his dedication to Washington's property owners, Senator Benton has *sponsored more than 50 property tax reform bills* during his time in the Legislature. Having studied the issue extensively for years, Benton continues his aim to *reform the unfair and burdensome property tax system* in Washington.

TAX JUSTICE:

Overwhelmingly impacting residents of Southwest Washington, Senator Benton has continued the *battle against Oregon's unfair taxation on income of Washington residents* who work in Oregon.

With a firm belief that *government spending has spiraled out of control* and the *tax burden on Washington residents is far too excessive*, Senator Benton has pushed for *state spending within its means* by employing a *strict priority list for essential government services*. He has also supported the concept of *government spending limits* and a *"rainy day" fund* as established in Initiative 601.

Senator Benton *adamantly opposes the estate tax, or “death” tax*, believing *it is devastating to family legacies and economic development*. Family businesses, especially small family farms, are unfairly and, Benton believes, unethically forced to liquidate assets, often essential to the business, in order to pay the steep tax.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE:

Senator Benton is *tough on crime*. He has worked diligently to *increase penalties for violent offenders*, and successfully sponsored legislation that would *limit where released sex offenders are allowed to live in relation to their victims*. He has also successfully *toughened drunk driving laws* in Washington state.

PATRIOTISM:

It is state law for public school students to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance every morning. Senator Benton learned that many schools leave this requirement up to individual classrooms, resulting in lapses. Benton has *encouraged public schools to fulfill their legal requirement to recite the flag salute every morning* by encouraging parents to call their child’s school or him to report such lapses.

After September 11, 2001, it became more important than ever for many people to *demonstrate their patriotism*. When local 17th District bus drivers were told that state law prohibited them from displaying the U.S. flag on their buses, Senator Benton, firmly believing that they should not be deprived of that right, stepped in and *solved the problem*.

After events of September 11, 2001, Senator Benton thought it was extremely important to declare a *national day of remembrance*. He wrote a letter to President George W. Bush expressing his *desire to declare September 11 Patriot’s Day*. Since then, President Bush has done just that.

PORNOGRAPHY OUT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES:

Firmly believing that tax dollars have no place enabling children access to pornography, Senator Benton has taken a *strong stand against state funding for libraries that have not taken steps to eradicate children’s access to Internet pornography*.

VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES

An ongoing commitment to veterans and the families of military personnel has always been important to Senator Benton. A self-described patriot, Benton has consistently *protected and advocated for the needs of veterans and military families* residing in Washington state.

Senator Benton was *honored to serve on the World War II Memorial Advisory Committee*, created by legislation he authored. His determination to make the project reflect *Washington’s deep appreciation for the veterans* of the war and the sacrifices of their families has been deeply appreciated and widely recognized by veterans in Washington state.

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